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Letter dated 23 September 2014 from the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In the letter dated 20 September 2014 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/2014/691, annex) and other statements made by Iraq, including the letter dated 25 June 2014 from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Iraq addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2014/440, annex), Iraq has made clear that it is facing a serious threat of continuing attacks from the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) coming out of safe havens in Syria. These safe havens are used by ISIL for training, planning, financing, and carrying out attacks across Iraqi borders and against Iraq's people. For these reasons, the Government of Iraq has asked that the United States lead international efforts to strike ISIL sites and military strongholds in Syria in order to end the continuing attacks on Iraq, to protect Iraqi citizens, and ultimately to enable and arm Iraqi forces to perform their task of regaining control of the Iraqi borders.

ISIL and other terrorist groups in Syria are a threat not only to Iraq, but also to many other countries, including the United States and our partners in the region and beyond. States must be able to defend themselves, in accordance with the inherent right of individual and collective self-defence, as reflected in Article 51 of the Charter of the United Nations, when, as is the case here, the government of the State where the threat is located is unwilling or unable to prevent the use of its territory for such attacks. The Syrian regime has shown that it cannot and will not confront these safe havens effectively itself. Accordingly, the United States has initiated necessary and proportionate military actions in Syria in order to eliminate the ongoing ISIL threat to Iraq, including by protecting Iraqi citizens from further attacks and by enabling Iraqi forces to regain control of Iraq's borders. In addition, the United States has initiated military actions in Syria against al-Qaida elements in Syria known as the Khorasan Group to address terrorist threats that they pose to the United States and our partners and allies.

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(*Signed*) Samantha J. Power

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